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SECRET

CITE [redacted]

DIST 3 JUNE 1968

COUNTRY CAMBODIA/NORTH VIETNAM/SOUTH VIETNAM/FRANCE

E0 12958 3.4(b)(1)>25Yrs (S)

DOI [redacted]

SUBJECT DISCUSSION BETWEEN SIHANOUK AND FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO CAMBODIA ON POSSIBLE COUP BY PRESIDENT KY DESIGNED TO TURN SOUTH VIETNAM INTO A NEUTRALIST COUNTRY

E0 12958 3.4(b)(1)>25Yrs (S)

ACQ [redacted]

FIELD NO.

SOURCE [redacted]

1. AT A FAREWELL AUDIENCE WITH PRINCE SIHANOUK ON 22 MAY 1968, THE DEPARTING FRENCH AMBASSADOR, HUBERT ARGOD, SAID BOTH THE FRENCH EMBASSY AND HE HIMSELF HAD DEFINITE INFORMATION FROM SAIGON THAT VICE PRESIDENT KY WAS TENDING TOWARDS A NEUTRALIST SOLUTION TO THE VIETNAM WAR. ARGOD SAID THAT KY WOULD PROBABLY ATTEMPT A COUP D'ETAT WITH THE SUPPORT OF SOME OF THE MILITARY AND EVEN WITH THAT OF THE NEWLY FORMED ALLIANCE OF FORCES FOR NATIONAL DEMOCRACY AND PEACE IF THIS ORGANIZATION GUARANTEED, WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT, TO MAKE SOUTH VIETNAM A NEUTRAL COUNTRY LIKE CAMBODIA. PERSONS CLOSE TO KY HAD TOLD THE FRENCH CONSULAR REPRESENTATIVE IN SAIGON THAT KY

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~~SECRET~~ ~~NO FOREIGN DISSEM~~
(classification) (dissem controls)

NO LONGER WISHED TO DEAL WITH THE AMERICANS AND THAT HE HAD DECIDED TO WORK TOWARDS A "SIHANOUKIST" SOLUTION TO THE TROUBLE IN SOUTH VIETNAM. ACCORDING TO SOUNDINGS MADE ON KY'S BEHALF AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND HIGH VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS, THIS WAS THE ONLY SOLUTION IMMEDIATELY ACCEPTABLE TO THE MAJORITY OF VIETNAMESE.

2. SIHANOUK SAID THAT HE ALSO HAD VERY RELIABLE INFORMATION TO THE SAME EFFECT AND THAT VIETNAMESE LIVING IN CAMBODIA HAD EVEN SOUNDED MEMBERS OF HIS GOVERNMENT TO DETERMINE WHAT CAMBODIA'S POSITION WOULD BE IF KY DECLARED FOR A NEUTRALIST SOLUTION AND AN ALLIANCE WITH THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT. SIHANOUK COMMENTED THAT IT WAS UNTHINKABLE THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE NLF WOULD LET HIMSELF BE SUPPLANTED BY A PERSON LIKE KY, AN ASSASSIN SEEKING A LAST SOLUTION BEFORE HIMSELF BEING LIQUIDATED.

3. [redacted] DISSEM. CINCPAC ARPAC PACAF PACFLT [redacted]

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